GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3829
ANSWERED ON:17.04.2002
FREIGHT TRAFFIC BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN
SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI;T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether rail freight traffic between India and Pakistan has been discontinued;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether India has asked Pakistan to resume freight traffic;

(d) if so, the response of the Pakistani Government in this regard; and

(e) the total loss suffered by Indian Railways as a result thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a)-(e) On 21st December 2001, Government announced that the Samjhauta Express and the Delhi-Lahore bus service would be terminated with effect from 1st January 2002. The decision, which was taken following the December 13 attack on India`s Parliament and Pakistan`s continued sponsorship of cross border terrorism, impacted on passenger travel between India and Pakistan. Restrictions did not apply to movement of railway freight traffic. However, Pakistan has since then not permitted interchange between the Indian and Pakistan Railways required for flow of railway freight traffic.

Government have sought a clarification from Pakistan about its intentions regarding freight traffic. Although Pakistan conveyed that the competent authorities in Pakistan have approved the movement of railway freight traffic, in reality such movement has not been permitted by it.